

March 9, 2010

Dear Governor Rell and Legislators:

My name is Eileen McAvoy. I was a child born into a home with a functional alcoholic father who was gone most of the time because of his job. I had a Mom who really didn't like me. At 7 ½ my life changed forever. I was sexually abused by a family member and it set the path for my destruction.

I became a hard drug user. Crack and alcohol were my drugs of choice. I married a man I did not love thinking it would change me. I had two daughters, Cathy and Susan. I guess I suppressed a lot and one day I went out and never came back. My children were with their father and I knew that they were okay. I picked up the drugs once again and a high that lasted for 10 minutes. I chased this high for 15 years. I did what a **woman** has to do to support her habit. I hated myself. I was in and out of jail, raped, beaten and abused in every way you can imagine. My Mom passed while I was in jail and I had no closure. I miss her so much.

The Katie Blair House was introduced to me by a counselor in Niantic. It took me a long time to get here. I came in March 2008. I left 8 months later because I felt my children needed me. Staff objected and I was not really ready to be back home.

Well I'm back again and this is why I need the staff, the house and the friends I've made here. I wake up and go to work. I put eye make-up on. I do this TODAY. Eight months ago I would do my hair without making eye contact with myself. My daughters are in my life. My Dad loves me today. I have a beautiful, new grandson who loves me. I can start fresh. I have my own bank account.

I can't even put into words what the staff at the Katie Blair house has done for me. I NEED THEM. I NEED KATIE BLAIR HOUSE. I never thought I would have to fight for the Katie Blair House to remain open. Please allow other women to receive everything beautiful that the Katie Blair staff and home have to offer. Thank you.

Eileen McAvoy